COBBETT'S WEEKLY POLITICAL REGISTER.

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"Among the various irregularities and abuses which have been detected and exposed by the Commissioners "of Naval Enquiry, none has created more jealousy and alarm in the breasts of the petitioners, than the "application of monies, appropriated by the legislature for the uses of the Navy, to other purposes, a "practice replete with danger to the constitution and to the liberty of this country; and, the detection "of such malversations, in one department of the state, induces apprehensions that others may not be more "faithfully and honestly administered."—Petition of the TOWN OF SOUTHAMPTON, relative to Lord Melville.

MR. PITT'S CASE.

(Continued from Vol. VII. p. 971.)

In the page, here referred to, I was compelled to break off, at the point where I was led to ask: "Will the reader believe, that the *general statement* of Lord Melville to Mr. Pitt, relative to the matter reported upon by Mr. Raikes, *ought* to have satisfied, or did satisfy, Mr. Pitt? Will he believe, that Mr. Pitt was so easily to be deceived, upon such a point, by Lord Melville, or by any body else, especially after *what he himself had been privy to?* For, let it be remembered, that the information of Mr. Raikes came *after*, and only about six months after, Mr. Pitt *knew* that Lord Melville had drawn out of the bank 40,000l. at once for the purpose of its being lent to Boyd and Benfield. This act, too, this violation of the law, he knew (if what he has positively declared before the Select Committee be true) was *first proposed by Lord Melville.* Was not this a circumstance, then, to make him regard some *inquiry* as necessary, upon receiving the information of Mr. Raikes? Indeed, can any one pretend, that, all the circumstances considered, he must not have *suspected* at least, that which was *known* not only to Mr. Raikes but to every great banker or money dealer in London? Mr. Pitt says, that, from what passed between him and Lord Melville upon the subject, he "was led to suppose, "that the Treasurer of the Navy did not *believe*, that any larger sums were drawn "from the bank, than such as were necessary for carrying on the *detail of the service in payments to individuals.*" So, then, he was "satisfied," it seems, not with any assurance of the Treasurer of the Navy, but with his mere *belief*, in opposition to the information of the governor of the Bank? This it was, that "so far satisfied him, that "he made no further inquiry!" He *relied*; but on what did he rely? Not on the word, not on the declaration, as appears to have been understood, but "on the *opinion*, given "him by the Treasurer of the Navy!" What ground is there, therefore, for pretending, that he was *deceived* by Lord Melville? And, indeed, notwithstanding all that has been said and insinuated by those who are so anxious to make a distinction between the case of Lord Melville and that of Mr. Pitt, where is the ground upon which they rest the assertion, that the latter was, in any one instance, *deceived* by the former? Where are, I will not say the proofs, to support such an assertion, but where are the circumstances that render the truth of that assertion probable?——As to Mr. Pitt's idea of the *magnitude of the sums* drawn from the bank and lodged at Mr. Coutts's, he says, that he understood, from the general statement of Lord Melville, that they were only "such as "were necessary for carrying on the *details* "*of the service in payment to individuals*;" a very loose and indeterminate expression; but, if it has any meaning that can operate as an excuse to Mr. Pitt, it must be confined to those *small sums*, of the difficulty of discharging which through the means of drafts directly upon the Bank, so much was said by Lord Melville and Mr. Trotter, and, since, by Mr. Canning. But, as was before stated, it seems to be *impossible*, that Mr. Pitt, whatever he might have heard from Lord Melville, and though Lord Melville had made a positive declaration to him instead of giving him a mere opinion; it seems quite impossible, that, after the information received from Mr. Raikes, Mr. Pitt *could have believed*, that the naval money withdrawn from the Bank and lodged at Mr. Coutts's was confined to *small sums*; because, as appears from the evidence, Mr. Raikes informed him, not merely that the Treasurer of the Navy drew sums of naval money from the Bank and lodged it at Mr. Coutts's, but, that "the Treasurer of the Navy now *kept* "*his cash* at Messrs. Coutts and Company's "INSTEAD *of the Bank*, and that NAVY "BILLS *were now paid by drafts upon* "*Messrs. Coutts and Company, instead of* "*drafts upon the Bank.*" This Mr. Raikes positively asserts was the purport of the information, communicated by him to Mr. Pitt. With what decency, therefore, let the reader determine, is it pretended, that Mr. Pitt was, upon the *opinion* of Lord Melville, *satisfied*, that only small sums to answer

more details of the office, were transferred from the Bank to the shop of Lord Melville's private bankers?——Driven from these paltry excuses, the partisans of Mr. Pitt take refuge behind another that will be found, I think, not to be a whit more tenable. "Well," say they, "allowing that the information of Mr. Raikes must have been "regarded as sufficiently authentic and official; allowing that Mr. Pitt was fully "aware of the gross violation of the law in "transferring the custody of any part of "the naval money from the Bank to Mr. "Coutts's; and, allowing, that he must "have clearly perceived that the amount of "this money was no less than that of the "whole of the supplies for the naval department of the public service; allowing "all this, still he has declared, that he neither knew nor suspected, *that private advantage or emolument* was therefrom derived by any person whatever." Upon this point, however, Lord Melville tells the Commissioners of Naval Inquiry, in his evidence (Register, Vol. VII. p. 483), that he had no hesitation in saying, that he believed and understood, that the Paymaster (Mr. Trotter) *did derive advantage or emolument* from withdrawing the naval money from the Bank and lodging it with his private banker, "and," adds he, most significantly, "I believe, it was *so understood* by OTHERS, at "different times, when the establishment "of the Navy Pay-Office was under consideration." Now, my lord, *who* were those "*others?*" Not the Commissioners of Accounts; not the Commissioners of Enquiry; for, in all the reports by them respectively laid before parliament, relative to the offices of the Treasurer and Paymaster of the Navy, never have they let drop any expression, that can possibly be tortured to mean, that they "*understood*," that the naval money, or any part of it, was to be, or ought to be, employed, in any way whatever, for the private advantage or emolument of the Paymaster of the Navy, or any other person or persons. Nay, is it not, on the contrary, well known, that these commissioners have uniformly set their face against every such practice; and that the Commissioners of Inquiry clearly "understood," from Mr. Trotter's *deposition* (See Register, Vol. VII. p. 466 and 467) that he derived, and was to derive, NO *advantage or emolument* from the use of the money issued for naval services? *Who*, therefore, my Lord, were those "*others*," that understood the matter in so very different a sense? We have no positive proof, that Mr. Pitt was alluded to by his Lordship, amongst those "others;" and, it is *possible*, that Mr. Pitt had no such understanding upon the subject; but, leaving the partisans of that gentleman and Lord Melville to discover, without including Mr. Pitt, the persons to whom it is possible his lordship might allude, we shall, I am of opinion, find reason quite sufficient to convince us, that it is improbable in the extreme, not to say impossible, that Mr. Pitt should not, when he received the information of Mr. Raikes, have suspected, and, indeed, that he should not have *known*, that *private advantage and emolument was derived* from the withdrawing of the naval money from the Bank and lodging it at a private banker's. We now know, that, from the passing of the act, in 1785, to Lord Melville's quitting the Navy Treasurership, in 1800, there were more than a hundred millions sterling of the naval money transferred from the Bank to Mr. Coutts's; we have seen, from the books of those bankers, that, during the whole of the same period, Mr. Trotter, the Paymaster of the Navy, was one of the greatest dealers in the public funds and securities, and one of the greatest discounters of private paper, in London; we have seen him giving his draft for fifty thousand, a hundred, two hundred, three hundred, or four or five hundred thousand pounds sterling, as familiarly as we common mortals talk of shillings or of Mr. Pitt's paper representatives of shillings; and, will any one believe, that, under a system of fiscal eves-dropping, absolutely without a parallel in any age or country, all this was unknown to the Chancellor of the Exchequer? Will any one believe, that Mr. Pitt was unacquainted with the intimacy that existed between Mr. Trotter and Lord Melville, an intimacy so unusual between persons so situated as to relative rank and power? Will any one believe, that Mr. Pitt, who knew from several official reports upon the subject of the Navy Pay Office, that the salary of Mr. Trotter was no more than 500 pounds a year, did not well know that Mr. Trotter was, at the time of Mr. Raikes's information, and long before had been, living in a style that could not possibly be supported under several thousands a year? Will any one believe, that Mr. Pitt was unacquainted with the purchases of Mr. Trotter; and that he did not frequently come athwart him in the money market? It was in, or about, the month of April, 1797, that Mr. Raikes gave his information, and, I ask the reader, if he believes, that *Mr. Coutts Trotter* could have funded Navy, Victualling and Transport bills, in the year 1796, to the amount of 2,137,515*l.* * sterling, without

* See papers laid before the House of Commons, June 11, 1805.

Mr. Pitt's knowing of it? And, if he did know of it, need it be asked, whether he must not have known of *the circumstances* that enabled Mr. Coutts Trotter to exceed, as a bill-holder, far to exceed, any other man, or any other company, the Governor and Company of the Bank of England not excepted? But, this is sporting with the patience of the reader: he must perceive; from the bare enumeration of the circumstances he must perceive, that it was next to impossible for Mr. Pitt not to have possessed a knowledge of the source of this immense, this almost incredible mass of commercial means.——At last, indeed, Mr. Pitt did *begin to suspect*, after he was *out of office*, and upon a suggestion of Lord Harrowby, that profits *might* have been made by withdrawing the naval money from the Bank and keeping it at a private banker's! At last! And upon the suggestion of Lord Harrowby too! This keen, this sharp-sighted, this penetrating, this ever watchful person, stood, in *this one instance*, in need of a flapper! Being asked by the Select Committee, whether, at any time previous to the late inquiry by the Naval Commissioners, he had any knowledge of, or reason to suspect, that private profits had been made by Mr. Trotter, or any other person, of naval monies, or that the business of the office was so conducted as to admit of private profit being made of such monies by any officer of that department, he answers: "I had no knowledge, at any time, previous to the inquiry of the Naval Commissioners, of *any such profits having been made by any person*; nor had I any suspicion of the business being so conducted as to admit of it, till after the communication I have before adverted to with Lord Harrowby, which conversation, to the best of my recollection, took place when I was *out of office*." He adds, in the two succeeding answers, that Lord Harrowby "did not tell him, that he (Lord Harrowby) *knew* that private profit had been made, but that he *appeared* to *suppose* that it might have been." Upon this point Lord Harrowby says, in his evidence (the whole of which see in Register, Vol. VII. p. 879 and the following two), "I had a conversation with Mr. Pitt, in the autumn of 1802, when we were *both out of office*. The only thing, which I recollect, is, that the name of *Mr. Coutts Trotter* occurred in that conversation," (whereat the reader will not wonder when he thinks of the 2,137,515 l. sterling's worth of government bills funded by the said Mr. Coutts Trotter as mentioned above) and "that I mentioned to Mr. Pitt, that I thought it not improbable, that, either "the naval money passing, in part, through "the house of Mr. Coutts, to which I found "he belonged, might have led to his introduction into that house, or, that the circumstance of his being a partner in it, might have led to the selection of that house for that purpose; meaning this with a reference to advantage derived to the general concerns of a banking house," (say shop: do call it shop, my lord!) "*necessarily* arising from the nature of their business, and *not from having any reason to believe*, that the naval money was used for the benefit of Mr. *Alexander* Trotter." Oh, dear, no! how should such a thought enter his Lordship's mind; especially when he knew, that Mr. Alexander's salary "had now been augmented to 800l. a year," a sum, doubtless, regarded by his Lordship as quite sufficient to support the style, in which Mr. Alexander Trotter lived; and, besides, it was, as his Lordship must have perceived, so very natural for the uncle voluntarily to give up, without fee or reward, all the advantage to the nephew, and be himself perfectly content with a salary of 800l. a year, together with some little income from real and funded property, of which, though his Lordship might not, perhaps, be very well able to account for the acquisition, he must, one would think, know that Mr. Alexander had acquired.—And here, since we have been beguiled into a digression upon the opinions of Lord Harrowby, we may as well make the observations that occur to us upon his conduct, relative to the main subject before us, namely, the conniving at the withdrawing of naval money from the Bank, and depositing it at a private shop, in gross violation of the law. Lord Harrowby, then Mr. Dudley Ryder, succeeded Lord Melville as Treasurer of the Navy, which office he held, at a salary of 4,000l. a year clear of all deductions, from the 2d of June, 1800, to the 20th of November, 1801. He tells the Commissioners of Naval Inquiry, in his evidence, which will be found in the Parliamentary Debates, Vol. III. p. 1202, that, though the practice of withdrawing naval money from the Bank to deposit with a private banker was not authorised by the spirit of the act, and though he had recently quitted an office of a similar nature, (the army pay office), in which the regulations of Mr. Burke's bill had been strictly complied with, without any complaint of inconvenience; these circumstances existed, it was (strange to tell!) some time before his attention was *drawn* to Mr. Trotter's practice of transferring. When it was drawn, however, to work he went; but, about what, think you? Not putting a stop to the practice, but about

making an inquiry into the *expediency* of the practice; and, though one would have thought, that there only required five minutes to open and read the statute-book, his Lordship went to the Bank, and, in process of time "had nearly completed "the inquiry," when he was prevented by a severe illness "from attending fur- "ther to the business of the office;" and so, he left the matter just where he found it. Precisely *what length of time* elapsed, before his lordship's "attention was drawn to the "subject," or *how long* it was between the drawing of his attention and his falling ill, we are not informed: all that we know is, that he filled the office, or, at least, that he received the salary, for the space of *a year and a half*; that the public paid him *six thousand pounds sterling* for his superintendance and responsibility; and that the practice which he found to exist, and the conniving at which practice has, in the case of his predecessor, been declared by the House of Commons to be a gross violation of the law and a high breach of duty, was continued during the whole of his Treasurership, and left by him to be pursued exactly as it was when he entered the office. But, though we possess not the advantage of knowing the date or duration of his lordship's illness, we have the pleasure to know, that it had a termination, and that, too, as will be well remembered as long as the Spanish war shall last, without producing a disqualification for office, and, as we must, of course, conclude, without totally destroying his powers of recollection. Yet, without supposing the severity of his illness to have greatly impaired his memory, we shall not, I think, find it very easy to account for his not having *communicated to his successor* the result of his long and painful inquiries, which, from the evidence of Mr. Bragge, he does not appear to have done; and, upon this score, our regret is the greater, when we reflect, that those inquiries were nearly completed, and, that, it was, perhaps, from the want of such communication, that the violation of the law was continued, almost a year longer, when Mr. Bragge finally put a stop to it, "in" (to use his own words) "the *course of the* summer of 1802." Upon being asked by the Commissioners of Naval enquiry, "what *reasons* induced "him to direct the practice to be discon- "tinued." Mr. Bragge answered: "I "conceived the practice to be inconsistent "with the spirit of the act for the regula- "tion of the office of the Treasurer of the "Navy, and that the conveniencies which "were suggested to result from it, in facili- "tating the transactions of business, were not "of weight sufficient to justify the con- "tinuance of such an irregularity." This is, unquestionably, a reason quite sufficient for putting a stop to the practice; but, we cannot help regretting, that, as Mr. Bragge is a lawyer, and a gentleman of tolerably sharp faculties, he did not refer, at *a more early period*, to "the act *for regulating* "the office," which he was appointed to fill, and for the filling of which he received from the public 4,000 pounds a year. "In "the *course* of the *summer!*" These gentlemen all appear to have a fondness for indeterminate expressions. Lord Harrowby talked with Mr. Pitt about it "in the *autumn* "of 1802." Where the action, or event, is connected with circumstances of cold and heat, wet and dry, of cloud and sunshine, then it is natural, and may be quite sufficient, to point out the *season* when it has taken place; but, in speaking of the time of putting a stop to the violation of an act of parliament, we look for *months* and *days*. Lord Harrowby's autumn may have begun with the harvest of 1802, that is to say, in the middle of July; and Mr. Bragge's summer may have ended with the middle of August; and thus, though using different denominations, both may have been speaking of exactly the same period. "I am in the "hearing of the public" (as Mr. Pitt sometimes humourously says with regard to the House of Commons), and, I think, that the public will remember something of the popular contest that agitated the nation, and more particularly the metropolis and its county, in the months of July and August, 1802; and, that, amongst the persons implicated in the angry discussion that arose out of that contest, was Mr. Coutts, the banker. The public will, I am pretty sure, recollect, that the ministerial newspapers and the Anti-Jacobin Review, from motives that I am not disposed to censure, made strong representations upon the conduct of Mr. Coutts in supporting the cause of Sir Francis Burdett, and some of them did not refrain from remarking upon what was termed his "*ingratitude* "to the government," hinting, at the same time, that he *no longer ought to be the keeper of the money for the public offices.* The readers of the Register will recollect, that at the time here referred to, I published (see vol. II. p. 164) an article, containing a declaration, on the part of Mr. Coutts, that he had not, in anywise, interfered in the Middlesex Election, and that he had never aided the interest of Sir Francis Burdett, either with his personal influence or with his purse, a declaration which I thought it my duty to publish, it having been com-

municated to me by a gentleman of high situation in life and of most scrupulous integrity. Now, it is not my wish to strain these facts; and I have reminded the public of them for no other purpose than that of bringing his mind back to a fair and full view of the situation of things, at the time when the withdrawing of the naval money from the bank and lodging it at Mr. Coutt's was actually, and for the first time, put a stop to, and when, as it would appear from the evidence of Mr. Pitt, he received the first intimation of *private emolument* being derived from the practice; and, in now returning to the case of Mr. Pitt, we must confess, I think, that there is a singular coincidence in all the circumstances; for, every one must be struck with the statement, that Lord Harrowby, who discovered the existence of Mr. Trotter's practice, and who set on foot an inquiry respecting it, should never have spoken to Mr. Pitt, till *after that gentleman was out of office*, though he continued in office for *nine months* after Lord Harrowby became Treasurer of the Navy. After Mr. Pitt was out of office, his lordship did, it seems, mention it to him; and, again when they were *both out of office*, in the autumn of 1802, his lordship appears to have discovered, and to have suggested to Mr. Pitt, that *private emolument*, to the banking shop, at least, must "ne-"cessarily" be derived from the transferring practice. Now, too, for the first time, they talked about Mr. Coutts Trotter, and appear to have found out, that the advantage derived from the temporary possession of the naval money might have led to that gentleman's connexion with the shop of Mr. Coutts. Mr. Pitt was asked by the Select Committee, whether upon these suggestions of Lord Harrowby, *he took any steps to ascertain the facts;* to which he answered in the negative. The reason of this appears to be, that he was then *out of office!* A want of *official authority*, and a scrupulous attachment to *forms*, seem to have every where presented themselves as an insuperable bar to investigation, on the part of Mr. Pitt, with respect to the detection of this gross violation of the law; and this appears the more extraordinary, when we recollect with what "fortitude" he set forms, and even laws, at defiance, when the object was to afford relief to Boyd and Benfield, though it is hardly possible to conceive, that, in the latter case, allowing all the alleged reasons to be good, the bond of public duty could have been thought stronger than in the former. He was out of the office, it is true; but, the office was still in existence, and was filled by a person, with whom he was, as yet (in the autumn of 1802) upon the most friendly and confidential footing, and in whose management of public affairs, he was, moreover, well known not to have abstained from interference; a circumstance of which Lord Harrowby could not, we must suppose, be unacquainted, and hence some persons may conclude, that Lord Harrowby might be induced to omit *communicating his suspicions to Mr. Addington*, an omission not otherwise to be easily accounted for, from any of those honourable motives, by which we must suppose a person like his lordship always to be actuated. Yet, whatever the cause may have been, we know that the effect has been to prolong the duration of the gross violation of the law: we have seen, that Mr. Raikes gave information respecting it in, or about, April 1797; that Lord Harrowby discovered its existence, mentioned it to Mr. Pitt, and was taking steps to put a stop to it in 1800, or 1801; that Mr. Bragge, after nearly a year's treasurership, did finally put a stop to it in the course of the summer of 1802, that Lord Harrowby suggested to Mr. Pitt in the autumn of 1802, that private emolument was necessarily derived to the private banking shop from the transfer of the naval money: all this we know, and we know besides, that, after all this, Mr. Pitt chose Lord Melville as is prime associate in a new ministry, that he placed him in that high and most important office, the head of the Admiralty, where he would necessarily become a great distributor of honours, trusts, and emoluments, and where he would as necessarily have the best opportunity of exerting his powerful influence as to all matters, past as well as future, connected with the office of Treasurer of the Navy; and, accordingly we have seen, that coeval with this his appointment was the re-appointment of Mr. Trotter to the paymastership of the navy, a re-appointment of which Mr. Pitt could not be ignorant, and which proceeded immediately from a person, well known to be, openly and avowedly declared to be, absolutely devoted to Mr. Pitt. It was, too, we must remember, after all these transactions; after Mr. Pitt's acquiring all the lights afforded by Mr. Raikes and Lord Harrowby; after his mind must have received more than enough to satisfy it as to the conduct of Lord Melville in what has now, by the House of Commons, been declared to be "a gross violation of the law "and a high breach of duty;" after all this it was, that he advised his Majesty to grant to the "*right trusty* and well-beloved council-"lor Henry Lord Viscount Melville," the sum of 1,500*l.* a year for life, in addition to

the immense sum he already annually received from the public purse. This we cannot but remember, and, remembering it, we are in no danger of forming an unjust judgment as to the conduct, the motives, and the public character of Mr. Pitt.

Thus have I, with that brevity, perspicuity, and force I have been able, placed before the reader the facts and the arguments that have occurred to me relative to this case, leaving him, first to divest his mind of all personal and party considerations, next to form his opinion, and then, as a loyal subject, as a lover of his country, and as an honest man, to act upon that opinion.

July 1, 1805. WM. COBBETT.

SUMMARY OF POLITICS.

VIEWS OF THE ROMAN CATHOLICS.—In a subsequent page of the present sheet will be found a letter upon this subject, to which letter I beg leave to request the attention of the reader. It breathes a spirit of moderation, which one must wish to see prevail in all discussions, but particularly in the discussion of a question involving the present tranquillity, and, probably, the permanent safety of the kingdom. The writer of the letter, to which I here refer, seems to think, that the claims, set forth in the petition of the Roman Catholics, would, if granted, only serve as an encouragement to the preferring of further and more important claims; and, that, if we make this one step, we shall never be able to stop, till concession upon concession has destroyed the Protestant hierarchy in Ireland, after which the whole of the establishment would soon follow. If I were of this opinion, I should say, "grant nothing." For, I am thoroughly persuaded, that, if the Church of England establishment fall, the monarchy will not long survive it. But, I am not of the opinion of this writer; for, though I do not say, nor do I think, that the grants to the Roman Catholics could have stopped with the yielding to the claims set forth in the petition, I think that it may easily be shown, and I do flatter myself, that I shall, as opportunity serves, be able to show, that the very means of satisfying the Roman Catholics might be made eminently conducive, not only to the safety of the church, as the church now stands, but to the restoring of it to that degree of influence amongst the people, from which every one must perceive it has fallen. When we talk, however, of dangers to the church, as a church, we must never forget *its share* of any danger that threatens *the state*; and, therefore, were we to conclude, that it would risk some loss of influence, and, consequently incur some degree of danger, from further concessions to the Roman Catholics, we should not determine against concession, till we were convinced, that this danger would be greater than the danger, which, from a refusal to concede, would arise to the church in common with the state. Against the insinuations, and I might say the abuse, as to myself, from the pens of some of the Orangists and their partisans in this country, I may, I think, safely rely for a defence on the observation and judgment of those, who have read what I have written upon subjects connected with the interests and honour of the Church of England. To the recollection of these persons I may safely appeal, whether I have ever, in compliance with the but too much prevailing notions of the times, imputed to the church establishment any portion of those calamities, which the nation has, either recently or at any former period, experienced; and whether I have not, on the contrary, seized every occasion that fairly offered itself, of endeavouring to maintain the establishment, and to resist every attempt at encroachment on any of its rights or privileges. With what degree of success these efforts of mine may have been attended, it is not for me to say; but, I assert, without any fear of contradiction, that I have maintained the ground whereon no other writer has ventured to make a stand; that I have never, in a single instance, flinched a hair's breadth from the cause of the church; and, that I have lived to see the day, when projects for robbing her of the remainder of her patrimony are no longer openly avowed. Those who assent to the truth of these assertions, though they now see me agreeing in the expediency of further concessions to the Roman Catholics, ought, I think, to give me credit for a thorough conviction, that those concessions might be made without any risk to the interests of the church.

THE CONTINENT seems to begin to wear an aspect of war. It appears, that the bold strides of Napoleon, in Italy, have, at last, excited some symptoms of a disposition to resistance on the part of Austria; and, if this disposition has not become visible till, possibly, it be too late, the fault is, in a great measure to be attributed to the ministers of England, whose system of politics, if any thing of theirs can be called a system, could not have been other than it has been, if the intention had been to aid Napoleon in the subjugation of the remainder of Europe. Our quarrel with France, as far as can be fairly inferred from the conduct and even from the declarations of the ministers, is for a selfish object; for *Malta*. Taking them

upon their own grounds, the French have a full right to contend, that Malta was the sole object of the war. There was, as we over and over again complained, at the outset, no other visible, no other professed, object with the men in power in this country; and, therefore, it is, as we said it would be, that the powers of the Continent have eyed us with mistrust, and have, accordingly, been calm, if not indifferent spectators of the contest. They saw, that it was a contest, in the issue of which, as far as related to our professed and apparent object, they had no interest. There was nothing great, nothing liberal in the cause; no wonder, therefore, that we have met with no greatness or liberality in those, to whom we looked for the means of sustaining it. The powers of the Continent have not forgotten the peace, the ignominious peace, of Amiens. Russia and Austria have not forgotten the losses of Sardinia and Portugal; nor have they forgotten our acquisition of the territories of Ceylon and Trinidad, by the giving up of which acquisition, they now know, that a compensation, if not a reinstatement, might have been obtained for the King of Sardinia.* And, those powers well know, though the remaining partisans of Mr. Pitt appear to have forgotten it, that the ministers who began and who concluded that peace are still in place, and have, of course, still the power of acting the same part again, as far, at least, as the French will let them. Mr. Pitt did, indeed, *talk* of "repressing the ambition and chas-"tising the insolence of Buonaparté;" but, the powers of the Continent, like Doctor Primrose, have "heard these words some-"where before." They have found to their cost, that it is not the threats but the promises, of this gentleman, that are to be dreaded; a truth which they might have learnt twenty years ago by listening to Lord North, who, upon one of the debates about India, said that he never absolutely despaired of any cause that Mr. Pitt did not solemnly promise to maintain. The powers of the Continent have learnt from dear bought experience, that Mr. Pitt's words do not kill Frenchmen; and the French have, during the same period, learnt to despise and to laugh at those turgid and verbose harangues, of which, at last, the soft Cymons of England begin to be weary of the repetition.—Nevertheless, so bold, so apparently boundless, are the strides of Napoleon, that it seems to be next to impossible that Austria should not make some sort of effort to arrest his progress. What may be the consequence of such efforts no man can tell. The danger on the side of war as well as on the side of a continuation of peace is so tremendous, that there is, at the present moment, no contemplating either with that steady and tranquil view which is necessary to the forming of a rational conclusion upon the subject.

MARQUIS WELLESLEY.——It is impossible to touch upon the subject of conquests, and the annexation of territory, without having one's mind drawn towards that ill fated peninsula, that great republic of states, which, for many years past, has been groaning under the rod of England; and, though the conquests and annexations of the French conqueror differ as widely from those of Lord Wellesley as the combats of Richard Cœur de Lion differed from those of Don Quixote against the procession of monks, or the flock of sheep, yet, we see that the French fail not to justify themselves by his Lordship's example, and, we may rest assured, that, to all the other great and numerous evils of our India wars and conquests, we have to add no small part of the danger which we now experience from the divided and enfeebled state of the continent of Europe. The subject of Lord Wellesley's wars, respecting which, in imitation, doubtless, of Cæsar, he has favoured the world with some reasonably voluminous commentaries, seems, at last, to have attracted the serious attention of the House of Commons, where MR. PAULL, whom report represents as a gentleman well qualified for the task, has, within these few days, moved for the production of certain official documents, preparatory to an investigation, which he has promised to institute early in the next session of parliament, relative to two particular points in Lord Wellesley's conduct, namely, his aggression on the Vizier of Oude, and his appointment of and great pecuniary allowances to, his brother Mr. Wellesley, as a Lieutenant Governor. These two points are, one would think, very simple; yet, Mr. Paull will do well not to make too frequent a call for *papers*, of which, though he appears to be a very young man, he may be assured, that Lord Castlereagh will furnish him with more than he will be able to read before his locks are as white as silver. This is not the age when men read folios; and our warriors in the East, who seem to be all animated by one soul, as to this matter, scorn to put their hands to any thing short of a folio. With the other good things of the East, they seem, too, to have appropriated to themselves the Eastern manner of writing, by the aid of which they so swell out their relations and confuse their facts, that, a plain country gentleman, after having gone through a dozen or two of pages, not being able to dis-

* Register, Vol. III. p. 744, and p. 1924.

cern what part is to be regarded as history, and what as romance, throws down the folio, with the observation, that "government "must be supported," and slap goes his vote for the minister. With submission, therefore, to Mr. Paull, I retain my opinion, that, to call for papers from the ministers, particularly upon India Affairs, is not the way to come at *truth*, nor to produce effect upon the members of parliament, or upon the public. It is beginning at the wrong end. The facts ought to be well ascertained by the mover, before he opens the subject, who has, then, nothing to do but explicitly to state and perseveringly to urge his charge, leaving the ministers to defend themselves, and, if their defence consist of false assertions, then it is quite time enough to call for papers to disprove those assertions, which papers would necessarily lie in a small compass, or, at least, the parts whereon the parties were at issue would be easily selected, and would, of course, be read, understood, and speedily decided upon. A different course has, however, in compliance with custom, been adopted by Mr. Paull; and, for the present, I have only to say, that I sincerely hope, that he may discover perseverance suitable to the importance of the subject he has undertaken, and that that perseverance may be crowned with success, being clearly of opinion, that, from every thing that has been published relative to the two points in question, the conduct of Lord Wellesley is unjustifiable. And, here, I cannot resist, by way of conclusion, from observing, that the declaration which the debate reporters have imputed to Sir William Boroughs, namely, that *there was nothing contrary to law* in the act of appointing Mr. Wellesley to the situation of Lieutenant Governor with great pecuniary allowances, has stricken me, as I know it has many others, with a degree of astonishment, which even a due consideration of that gentleman's situation and probable views has not been able entirely to remove.

THE COMBINED FLEETS our vigilant ministers have found, at last, in the harbour of Martinico. The intelligence comes from St. Lucia, where it had, on the 14th of May, been notified, that an enemy's fleet of 10 sail of the line and 6 frigates had gone, a day or two before, into the harbour of Fort Royal, Martinico. The following is a copy of the note of Lord Hawkesbury, communicating this intelligence to the Mayor of London: "Lord Hawkesbury presents his com-"pliments to the Lord Mayor of London, "and sends him inclosed an entry from the "log-book of the Triton, Capt. Marshall, "dated St. Lucie the 14th of May last, "which Lord Hawkesbury has just received "in a letter from the Mayor of Liverpool, "at which port Capt. Marshall arrived on "the 29th ult.; and Lord Hawkesbury re-"quests the Lord Mayor will be so good as "to communicate the information therein "contained to Lloyd's Coffee-house."—— The entry from the Log Book of the Triton is as follows.——"Information was re-"ceived here (St. Lucie) this day, May 14, "from Captain Morris, commanding at the "Diamond Rock, that a French fleet, con-"sisting of sixteen sail of the line, six fri-"gates, and three brigs, had this morning "passed the Rock, and gone into Fort Roy-"al, Martinique.——On the 21st of May "was boarded by a boat from his Majesty's "ship Goolan, Captain Ayscough, off Cape "Samana and St. Domingo, to whom Cap-"tain Marshall communicated the above "information, and with whom he imme-"diately proceeded to Jamaica. On Mon-"day the 10th of June, Captain Marshall "was spoke by his Majesty's frigate, the "Mercury, Captain ————, in lat. 40. "51. N. and long. 48. W. bound from Ja-"maica for England, and to whom Captain "Marshall made the communication." The combined force is stated to be, of *French*, 11 sail of the line and 7 frigates; of *Spanish*, 5 sail of the line, 1 frigate, and 1 brig.—— The English force, under Admirals Dacres and Cochrane, consists of 9 ships of the line, besides frigates and sloops of war.—— Of Lord Nelson, who has about 10 sail of the line under him, it is said, that he was at Madeira, on his way to Jamaica, on the 17th of May.——The readers of the Register will now call to mind, that, from the moment a war with Spain was talked of, I besought their attention to the dangers, which we should be exposed to in the West Indies; that I have repeatedly dwelt upon the necessity of providing for the defence, both by land and sea, of those valuable possessions; and that I have more than once expressed my apprehension, that, while we were watching over the land of Egypt, in which we had no more interest, than we had in the lands which, as some suppose, make part of the moon, the enemy would capture, or at least, *lay waste* (for that I regarded as his object) those possessions which we have held for so long a time, which are so congenial to the nature of our warlike force, and which have been found so conducive to our national strength and prosperity. The Brazils, the Cape of Good Hope, Ceylon, have all been mentioned as the probable objects of the combined expedition. But, there was great improbability in these conjectures. Napoleon and his councillors make a great deal of

our "Empire in the East," in their *representations* against us; but, they are not such fools as in earnest to envy us the possession of that Empire, though we hear a ministerial writer congratulating the public that the combined fleets have not taken that direction. Napoleon well knows what possessions are most valuable to us, and those he appears resolved to take from us, to destroy, or, at the very least, materially to injure. What, therefore, are we to think of the writers in the ministerial papers, who rejoice, or, who pretend, at least, to rejoice, that the combined fleets are safely moored in the West Indies! That the French intend to employ their troops against the blacks in Saint Domingo is quite improbable. They will, I should think, at once pitch on upon our Leeward Islands, and not go to Jamaica, where, from the intelligence they will have received they will fear to have to face Lord Nelson, than whom they would rather meet with Satan himself. Indeed, the apparition of Lord Nelson will haunt them, from the moment they hear that he is in pursuit of them; and, except in case of accident to him (which God forbid!), they will find it difficult to stir from under their batteries for more than a fortnight or three weeks after their arrival at Martinico. So that, they may, probably, be able to effect nothing more than a capture of one or two of the Leeward Islands; which, however, they may render not worth our recovering, even if we had troops to spare for the undertaking. Of Antigua they will be likely to make sure on account of its dock-yards, and of the additional means thereby to be acquired of harrassing our trade. When Lord Nelson has arrived, they will probably go and remain quietly under their batteries of Fort Royal; and, in that case, the very least evil arising to us from the expedition, will be, the cost in money and the waste in lives arising from the necessity which we shall be under of keeping, in the West Indies, twenty sail of the line more, during the war, than we should have wanted there, had we not sent a writer of Epigrams to the court of Madrid! How dearly have we paid; and how dearly shall we yet pay, for being ruled by a minister beset with "young friends!"——[Since the above was written, intelligence has been received by government, that the Combined Fleets were still at Martinico on the 22d of May.]

THE STATE OF THE ARMY has undergone another examination by Colonel Craufurd, who, on the 28th ultimo, proposed, after a very long and very able speech, a resolution upon the subject. Mr. Pitt, like the Copper Captain, "*scorned* to *stoop* to a defence," from his own lips, at least, and left it, therefore, to flow from those of Lord Castlereagh. There was a day, when conduct like this in Mr. Pitt, might, with some persons, have passed for *dignified*; but that day is passed; for neither silence nor any thing else will ever be attributed to *dignity of mind*, in the man who has sought for a reconciliation with, and who has lived in a state of abject political subjection to, persons, whom, only a few months ago, he characterised by every phrase he could think of descriptive of "*in-*" "*capacity* and *imbecility*."—— Colonel Craufurd having, during his speech, noticed the ludicrous circumstance, that he himself, might, in consequence of the present system, find himself under the command of a certain pastry-cook in the city of London, to whom he very pointedly and very properly alluded, the hireling part of the press, through the means of which any man may procure the publication of any thing, provided he be willing and able *to pay* for it, has been animadverting very severely upon what they call "the *indelicacy* and *illibe-*" "*rality*" of the allusion; but, all those who heard Colonel Craufurd's speech must at once reject such an accusation; for, he spoke very handsomely of the pastry-cook in question, as a pastry-cook; and, as to the particular charges of *illiberality* and *indelicacy*, nothing can be farther from the truth, for he expressly applauded the pastry of the Volunteer Colonel, dwelt with evident pleasure on the delicacy of it, and, of course, encouraged a liberality of purchase in the eaters thereof. All that he found fault with, was, that the talents, by which the said pastry was produced, were directed from their proper sphere, especially as such diversion might tend to the destruction of the lives of men, to say nothing about the liberties of the country. The objection of Colonel Craufurd was not to the cook in question assuming the rank of Colonel, and exercising the functions thereunto attached over the volunteers, but to his exercising those functions *over the real soldiers*. What would it be to him whether Colonel Pitt took the command of Colonel Pattypan, or Colonel Pattypan of Colonel Pitt? But, when it becomes only possible, that either of them may assume the command over him, it then becomes him, or any real soldier; it then becomes him, as an officer of the army and as a friend to his country, to make and to urge his objection.

MR. COCHRANE JOHNSTONE.——The occurrences relating to this gentleman, late a Colonel in the army and the Governor of Dominica, having, and not without reason, excited an extraordinary degree of attention

and interest, I regret, that I have not, at present, time to make, upon the subject, those observations, which have presented themselves to my mind, and to which, in my next sheet, I shall have to solicit the attention of the reader. The subject was introduced in the House of Commons on the 28th ultimo, by General Fitzpatrick; and, closely connected as it evidently is with the first interests of the regular army, I should not think myself justifiable in the eyes of my readers, if I lost one moment in laying before them, with as much accuracy as the nature of the case admits of, the sentiments and the words of General Fitzpatrick, whose universally acknowledged judgment and integrity must give a favourable impression with respect to any cause that he espouses. "I rise, Sir," says he, "to mention a subject on which it is my intention hereafter "to submit a motion to the House; and I "wish to take the present opportunity of "doing so, because it relates to that military administration which is to form part "of the business of this day's discussion. "The present advanced state of the sessions "will prevent my being able to bring forward any motion, though I wish it much. "It is, however, a subject of such extreme "importance, that it is necessary for me to "take some notice of it. The House may "be assured I shall state it in form on a "future occasion, and as early as possible. "The subject consists of a very gross and "alarming evil; one which, I apprehend, has but lately crept into the administration of the military law of this "country. I trust, the practice to which "I allude is an innovation of not many "years standing. I am informed it is. It "respects the execution of the duties of the "office of Judge Advocate General of the "Army. I find, that under the present "practice there is in the office of Judge "Advocate the assumption of a power which "I conceive is not consistent with that office, and not warranted by the laws and "constitution of this country. Every gentleman who hears me knows how great "the extent of the royal prerogative is with "respect to the military government. Every "one knows the power of his Majesty to "dismiss, without a court martial, any person who bears a commission in the army. "I should be the last man to call in question the royal prerogative, but I am sure "no man will contradict me when I say, "that a prerogative of such extent ought "to be exercised *under the advice of responsible ministers*. The law of this "country enables his Majesty to appoint "courts martial for military offences.—The "law places in his Majesty the right of "confirming or remitting their sentences, "but I do not believe that the law or the "constitution of this country could ever intend that the officer of the crown, in the "exercise of such a prerogative, should be "the Judge Advocate of the Army. I believe he is at present the sole adviser of "the crown; I believe that this practice "has prevailed only during a part of the "time the Right Honourable Baronet has "been in possession of it. Formerly the "transmission of sentences of courts martial was through the office of the Secretary at War. The Secretary at War of "course became responsible for the advice "he gave. With respect to his decision, I am not sure that I think that "was sufficiently solemn for a decision "on so important a point. *I cannot "conceive why the lives, fortunes, and "characters of his Majesty's military officers should not be entitled to as solemn a "consideration as those of every other subject in the country.* Every one knows "that those important concerns, as they "affect other classes of his Majesty's subjects, are decided by his Majesty in council. I think the same solemnity ought "to be observed with regard to the sentences of courts martial; but that will "be a question for future consideration. "That this practice does prevail, and has "been attended with great hardship to individuals, I shall be enabled to shew in "a case that has lately occurred, and has "spread the greatest alarm throughout the "whole army: I allude to the case of "COLONEL COCHRANE JOHNSTONE, a gentleman who, *after a trial by a court-martial, and an honourable acquittal, has, "at the instance of the Judge Advocate, "been exposed to the penalties and punishment attendant upon guilt.* This is what "I shall submit to parliament. I am aware "that an appeal from the sentence of any "court-martial to this House is a delicate "question; but in the present case the appeal is in favour of the court-martial, "and seeks redress against the effects of "undue influence. I beg pardon for dwelling so long on the subject. I have risen "to give this notice, and I shall bring forward the motion early next sessions. It "will consist of two branches; one will "be a complaint against the exercise of "the office; the other will refer to the "means of defining the power of the officer, and will suggest some provisions "as to the manner of his conducting himself in future."——In these sentiments every one, who has any regard for justice,

and for the good of the military service, must, I think, heartily agree. As to the particular case of Mr. Cochrane Johnstone, I have not, as I said before, now sufficient time before me to enter into its merits; but, I cannot suffer this paper to go from under my hand without declaring, that, after a very attentive perusal of his very able letter to the Duke of York, together with the documents accompanying it, I am firmly convinced, that he has, in consequence of misinformation and bad advice, been treated in a manner, not to be justified upon any of those principles which have long happily distinguished the laws and usages of the British monarchy. There is one circumstance more to notice here, and that is, that this gentleman is a relation of Lord Melville; but, I am certain, that the reader will turn with scorn from the idea of visiting upon one man the imputations against another, however nearly they may be connected by those ties, which should never produce any but the most amiable and beneficent effects.

ADMIRAL DUCKWORTH.——It will be recollected, that, on the 7th ultimo, Colonel Wood made a motion in the House of Commons, for certain papers relative to the proceedings of a court martial, held at Portsmouth some time before, for the trial of Admiral Duckworth, upon charges preferred against him by Captain Wood, late of the Acasta frigate. Mr. W. Dickinson, Captain Bennet, *Sir William Elford*, Mr. Baker, Admiral Markham, Lord Glenbervie, and Capt. Harvey, spoke against the motion; and, to use the words of the Times newspaper (and why I quote that paper I shall presently state), "the *whole House*, with the exception of the honourable Colonel himself, "negatived the motion for the production of "papers." That this statement is correct I know; and, I must confess that I know it with regret; for, after all that we have seen and heard during the last six months, I could have earnestly wished to see the House of Commons not only grant the papers called for by Colonel Wood, but lend to that gentleman every necessary assistance in the prosecution of the inquiry, which was the object he professed to have in view. In his speech he unequivocally charged Admiral Duckworth with a wilful violation of the 18th article of war, which article positively forbids any captain or other commander of a King's ship from taking on board, or causing to be taken on board, any goods or merchandizes whatsoever, except in cases specified in the article of war, and which exception does not apply to the present case. At this time I shall only observe, that, according to the minutes of the evidence taken before the court-martial, and purporting to be "pub-"lished by permission of the Lords Com-"missioners of the Admiralty;" according to these minutes, it appears, that one of the King's ships was, by the order of Admiral Duckworth, loaded with a great quantity of goods and merchandizes, in direct violation of the law. The gentlemen, who spoke against the motion of Colonel Wood, did not attempt to deny the charge. They all *spoke to character.* One had known him a long time; one had known him a shorter time; another had had the honour of commanding him; another had had the greater honour of being commanded by him; another had had the pleasure to sail with him in several voyages; another had had the happiness of his society on shore; and all agreeing, with that truth, doubtless, which ought to be expected from them upon such an occasion, that he was a most amiable and disinterested man. But, what had this to do with the loading of the Acasta? What had it to do with the charge preferred? What had it, I would ask Admiral Markham, to do with the violation of the law alleged by Colonel Wood? Admiral Markham's words, as reported in the Times newspaper, which I quote because it is a print which has been most steadily and most laudably engaged in supporting the cause of the country against the partisans of Lord Melville; his words, as here reported, were as follow:——"Ad-"miral Markham stated what he knew of "the gallant admiral. He had served un-"der his command; he had known him "thirty years; he went out with him to "the West Indies in 1789. In 1797 and "1798, he was under him on the coast of "Ireland; he went to the Mediterranean "in 1798; in the end of 1798, he went, "subject to his orders, to Minorca, second "in command. Knowing so much of the "gallant admiral, he felt it to be incumbent "upon him to give his opinion on this oc-"casion to the House, and he could honest-"ly declare, that during the whole period, "he never knew him do any thing that was "oppressive to the officers under his com-"mand. With respect to the *law* opinion, "he would just say, that probably, *not an "officer in the navy but might be superceded "on such an opinion; for, hardly one of "them was free from the sin of transgres-"sion as to the eighteenth article of war.* "*(A laugh.)* Most captains brought home "a pipe, or even more, of wine for himself "and friends, when on a wine station; and "he himself had, *when at the Admiralty, "requested some of his naval friends to "bring him some wine.*] An hon. gen-

"tleman over against him (Sir Philip Ste-"phens), must remember the practice be-"fore he was born. *(Laugh.)*"——What! And is it true, then, that the law is thus set at defiance? Is it true, that there is scarcely a Captain in the Navy who has not violated the law in a point where there is no possibility of misunderstanding it? If this be so, the Parliament House was, surely, not the place to proclaim the fact aloud, and to "*laugh*" at it; and, I think, it will be agreed, that, of *all men in the world*, with the single exception of Lord St. Vincent, Admiral Markham should have been the *last man* so to proclaim and so to laugh. What! the very gentleman, who, in proportion to his capacity, has been the first amongst the pursuers of the enormities brought to light by the Commissioners of Naval Inquiry! Is it true, that while the House yet rings with his bold assertion, that one *third part* of the naval money might be saved by *putting a stop to abuses*; is it, can it be, true, that this very gentleman has since stood up to "*laugh*" at a violation of the law, a *gross*, a most gross, violation of the law, in all the officers of the Navy; and even to avow, that he, while a Lord Commissioner of the Admiralty, requested of some of those officers to do, that which we know the law has positively prohibited!—I shall return to this subject; for, with me, where there is not *perfect impartiality*, there is *no justice*.

Athol Claim.——Upon this subject I have no room for remark; but, I cannot refrain from saying, that, in the course of a week or two, I hope to be able to exhibit the whole transaction to my readers in its true light.

VIEWS OF THE CATHOLICS.

[The following letter was sent to me previous to the discussion of the Catholic Question. Want of room then prevented its insertion; but, the reasoning it contains is applicable to all times, and, as it appears to me to state the *real grounds*, upon which moderate and disinterested men have opposed the claims of the Catholics, I think it worthy of public attention, and a further motive for its insertion at present, is, that it will probably lead to a discussion of this important part of the subject.]

Sir,——I have perused the petition of the Roman Catholics of Ireland, with that attention which a document of such importance deserves; and if the whole of the case, with all its connexions, under all its bearings, and with all the more or less remote consequences which are expected to flow from it, have been fully and fairly stated; if "emancipation" is to be understood in the limited and strict sense which the gentlemen who have signed the petition appear to give it; if no *further views* are concealed under this expression of their principles and wishes; I should have no hesitation to admit the policy and expediency of acceding to their demands. But, with every sentiment of respect towards many of those who have subscribed this act, I must be permitted to doubt, if it can be considered as containing the *whole* of the concessions which are ultimately expected from the Legislature. The principal Catholics in Ireland may very possibly look to nothing more than what is comprised in their petition; but if the knowledge which I have been able to obtain of the sentiments of the great bulk of his Majesty's Catholic subjects in that country is correct, these latter will be by no means satisfied with the, what would be to them nugatory and useless privileges of sitting in the Houses of Parliament, filling the great offices of state, &c. *Their* views are said to be more substantial; *they* look forward to an exemption from those tithes which they now pay to the Protestant clergy, and nothing short of this will, I am assured, allay *their* discontents. I do not notice other grievances which may exist in Ireland, such as the mode of farming out estates, &c. as they are not immediately connected with the purpose of the present inquiry.——If such are the views of the great body of the Catholics, and there seems to be but little doubt on this point in the minds of those who appear to be best acquainted with the interior of Ireland; it behoves us well to consider, whether the attainment of them will not be very much facilitated by granting that increase of power, which is the avowed object of the present petition? And what effect their final accomplishment would produce on the whole system of internal polity of the British empire?——With respect to the first of these questions, little need be said, as it must be obvious that such an accession of power as the Roman Catholic interest would derive from the acquiescence of the Legislature in the demands specified in the petition, must necessarily add to the means which it may already possess, of furthering the attainment of its future objects. ——And with regard to the second question, that is to say, the effect which may be produced on our internal polity, I am inclined to apprehend, that as the measure to which I allude must be an imperial measure, affecting alike all parts of the British empire, an exemption from tithes must inevitably tend to the total dissolution of our church establishment, not only in Ireland, but in this country, as well as of the various

institutions derived from, or interwoven with it.——If dissenters of the Roman Catholic persuasion are exempted from the burthen of contributing to the support of the ministers of the established church, upon the ground that they ought not in justice to be called upon to maintain ministers whose doctrines they do not profess, and whose ministry they do not require, I cannot see how that exemption can be with-held from dissenters of every other description; and if that exemption should be general, which I contend it must be, if granted at all, a wide door would be thrown open to all those of the established church who might wish to escape the payment of tithes, to secede from that church, or, at least, to all those who may feel less indifference with respect to their worldly concerns than to those of religion.——What may be the numbers of those who may be thus tempted to become seceders, I shall leave to the conjectures and calculations of those who have had opportunities of observing the present influence of the religious principle throughout this country. This influence is visibly and rapidly decreasing; and should the Legislature hereafter deprive the established church of all that pre-eminence, and all those exclusive privileges, with respect to civil rights, which its members now enjoy, whilst at the same time it holds out the certainty of an exemption from pecuniary burthens to those who secede from it, the consequences must be evident.——Some of these seceders may, indeed, have to support the ministers of whatever persuasion they may chuse to embrace; but, upon the same principle that Roman Catholics may claim to be exempted from paying tithes to a Protestant minister, because they are not of that persuasion, other persons, who profess no religion at all may, with equal justice, claim to be exempted from paying to any minister of any persuasion, because they are of none.——These observations, with respect to tithes, will apply with equal force as to rates for the repairs of churches, as well as the several duties and obligations arising out of our establishment; for it would be absurd to grant an exemption from the one, leaving the others to subsist. And if the measure of emancipation should be hereafter pushed to the extent which I have supposed, the confusion will be general; and the least of the evils which will ensue from it will be, that of a disgraceful competition between churches of various persuasions, as to which shall gain over the greatest number of adherents, by calling for the least pecuniary remuneration; or, in other words, by exercising their ministry at the cheapest rate.——None of your correspondents have, as far as I have seen, examined the question of emancipation under this point of view. If any of them regard these opinions as erroneous, and my apprehensions as unfounded, I shall be very glad to be set aright, and they will find me open to conviction.——I feel as strongly as any man the expediency of rendering every class of the King's subjects happy and contented, and thereby of promoting a thorough and cordial union between all the parts of the British empire in this eventful crisis; and I again repeat, that I should be disposed to accede to the prayer of the Catholic petition, if it can be shewn that the Catholics will stop here; and that these concessions will not ultimately lead to a measure which will draw on the disastrous consequences which I have touched upon.——I am well persuaded of the extreme importance of tranquillizing Ireland, as well as of the policy of making all reasonable sacrifices to this effect; and, abstractedly from all political considerations, I am an advocate for a due religious toleration; but I must be understood to mean that degree of toleration which is compatible with the prosperity and existence of our church establishment. And let me here add, that toleration is in no case a *matter of right*, as I have seen it stated to be in one of your late Registers. It is a mere question of policy and expediency: for I contend, that the lawful sovereign power of a country has a most perfect *right*, either to with-hold toleration altogether, or to grant it in whatever degree, and under whatever modifications it may deem consistent with the welfare of the state.——I am, Sir, Your's, &c. ——A CHURCHMAN.

5th April, 1805.

MERCHANTS' PARLIAMENTARY PRIVILEGE.

SIR,——The public are very highly indebted to Mr. Serjeant Best, for having directed the attention of parliament to the defect in the statute of the 4th of his present Majesty, respecting merchants and traders having privilege of parliament.——This very wholesome and beneficial act was intended to relieve the public from the serious inconveniencies which had been felt by the mercantile world, from persons in trade being entitled to the privilege of parliament; and it enacted, that in case a trader having privilege of parliament, did not within two months after an affidavit of debt had been filed in one of the courts at Westminster by the creditor of such trader, either pay, compound, or give such security for the debt to be recovered in the action, as should be approved of by a judge of the court, wherein such affidavit was filed and action brought,

that such trader, notwithstanding his privilege, might be declared bankrupt from the expiration of that period; but the statute, very unfortunately, does not point out in what manner such action can be proceeded in so as to facilitate the recovery of the debt; and, therefore, in those cases wherein bonds are entered into with such sufficient sureties to pay whatever may be recovered in the action with costs, in order to prevent the debtor becoming bankrupt, the creditors are left without any remedy, unless the debtor voluntarily enters an appearance to the process so issued against him; but if he refuses or neglects to do so, the creditor is deprived of all the benefit the legislature intended he should have by virtue of that act.——It appears that the judge before whom the bond is given, according to the act, has no power to make it a condition in such bond, that the debtor shall enter an appearance to the process issued against him, according to this act, within the time prescribed by the courts in ordinary cases; and, therefore, the creditor is left without any remedy whatever, as he cannot enter an appearance to the process he has issued, and the bond given according to this statute to prevent the debtor becoming bankrupt is of no avail, as "the condition "of the bond is only to pay such sums as "may be recovered in the action so brought, "and costs;" and in the event of the death of the debtor, the bond must be deemed void, no judgment having been had in the action so brought from the want of an appearance; and the like inconvenience will also arise in case the debtor ceases to have privilege for the action being brought by summons and original bill, according to the 4th of the present King, and not by common process, it is understood the creditor in that event cannot proceed further in the action brought according to that statute.——From these circumstances it is presumed the learned serjeant had been induced to bring forward the bill now before parliament, in order to remedy the inconveniencies before stated, and to give effect to the intention of the legislature in passing the before-mentioned act, and as the intended act does not in any manner interfere with the personal privileges of any member, whether in trade or otherwise, it is sincerely to be wished the bill introduced by Mr. Serjeant Best may pass into a law.——If the principle of the bill had been novel, some degree of jealousy might naturally have been expected to have arisen on the occasion; but as it is only intended to remedy a defect in a former act, so as the intention of the legislature in passing that act may not be defeated, it is expected the independence and integrity of parliament will allow the present bill to pass into a law.——It is understood that the late chief justice of England often expressed his regret that from the defect in this act the public were deprived of the benefit the legislature intended they should have derived from it.—ALFRED.——*25th June*, 1805.

WHO IS THE IRISH MINISTER?

SIR,——Being a plain man and very little accustomed to public business I take this liberty of writing to you and hope that either you, Mr. Cobbett, or some of your correspondents will assist me with advice on the following case.——By the death of a near relation I lately became entitled to a claim of some value upon the Irish government. I consulted my attorney, who is a very wise man in politics, and has a friend in the treasury, as to the manner in which I ought to proceed to get my claim brought forward. In his opinion no time was to be lost in applying in person to the Irish minister, but there a difficulty occurred, namely, to ascertain who this minister was; but this was happily removed by an application to our treasury friend, who declared it to be beyond a doubt that, since the union, the Secretary of State for the Home Department was the Irish minister. With some pains I succeeded in obtaining an audience of Lord Hawkesbury, but I had no sooner finished my story, than his lordship cut me short, by saying the business in question came within the province of Mr. Vansittart's official duties. To Mr. Vansittart I next applied, but he told me that as it was a money transaction I had better see Mr. Foster. Mr. Foster expressed great readiness to assist me, but recommended me to do nothing without knowing Lord Hardwick's sentiments upon the subject. I then, Sir, made a journey to Dublin, but though Lord Hardwicke was very civil *he* said, that *he could do nothing* till he saw Mr. Marsden. I thought it right then to go to Mr. Marsden, hoping that at last I had fixed upon my man, but how great was my disappointment to find from him that, as my claim was of great importance it was quite necessary that I should see Lord Redesdale. Thus, Mr. Cobbett, I have been baffled in all my attempts and, therefore, I hope you will insert this statement in your Register, that I may have an opportunity of being accurately informed who the Irish minister is.——Your obedient servant.—M. M.—*June* 20, 1805.

FOREIGN OFFICIAL PAPERS.

M. Schimmelpenninck's Speech, concluded from p. 928.

I think what I have advanced is sufficient for

the present: but perhaps your High Mightinesses, perhaps the nation, have a right to examine and consider upon the measures I intend to adopt for the redress of their grievances, and the renewing of their prosperity.——It is needless to say a single word respecting my inclination and resolution to sacrifice what is most dear to me, in order to accomplish so desirable an object. This very hall, Paris, Amiens, and London, can testify my love and zeal for my country.——I have no doubt of succeeding in these undertakings. My hopes are founded on Providence, whom I adore, and whose care and protection we have so often experienced.——On the calm reason and sound judgment of the nation; on that valour which ever distinguished them; on their good faith, honour, and inward conviction, depends this last attempt to re-establish their happiness.——It likewise depends on the assistance, and concord in opinion, of your High Mightinesses; on the wisdom of your resolutions; on the power of your example; and on the firmness of your courage; objects in which I cannot be disappointed if I have acquired any knowledge of mankind.——Finally, it depends on our love for our country, and the great promises I have of the assistance of the great Napoleon, that extraordinary genius, who is admired both by friends and foes, who, after having caused a change in the affairs of France, which will be a subject of wonder and astonishment to future ages, has obtained the greatest influence over us, as well as over several other nations, of whose friendship I have the greater reason to boast, because it was obtained by never swerving from truth or rectitude in all my words, my actions, or even in my thoughts, which his penetrating eye read in the deepest recesses of my heart.——Notwithstanding these hopes, I am not certain of attaining my end. The book of futurity is shut to yourselves as well as to me. As for myself, I shall never quit my object, till I have used every possible effort in my power to attain it; I shall never quit it dishonourably. May Heaven avert all disappointment, may its blessings crown our labour with success, and re-establish the nation in its former flourishing state and happiness.

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Extract from French Official Paper, 5th May, 1805, concluded from p. 996.

Gentlemen of the legislative body,——I have caused a detailed account to be rendered to me of all the parts of the administration. I have introduced into these divers branches the same simplicity that, with the help of the consulta and of the censure, I established in the division of the constitutions of Lyons. Whatever is good, whatever is beautiful, is always the result of a uniform and simple system. I have suppressed the double organization of the departmental administrations, and of the administrations of prefecture, because I have thought that by resting the administration solely upon the prefects, not only a million would be economized in the expenses, but a greater rapidity would be obtained in the course of business. If I have annexed to the prefects a council for litigations, it is to the principle which requires that the administration be the act of one, and that the decision of litigious objects be the act of many.——The statutes which you have just heard read, extend to my people of Italy the benefits of the code, over the drawing up of which I myself presided. I have ordered my council to prepare an organization of the judiciary order which may render to the tribunals the lustre and consideration which it is my intention to give them. I could not approve that a prætor alone should be called to pronounce upon the fortune of the citizens, and that judges hidden from the eyes of the public should decide in secret not only upon their property but upon their lives. In the organization which will be presented to you, my council will study to make my people enjoy all the advantages which result from collective tribunals, from a public procedure, and from a contradictory defence. It is to secure to them a justice more evidently enlightened, that I have established that the circumstances in which Italy now is, permitted me to think of the establishment of juries; but the judges must pronounce like the juries, from their sole conviction, and without deliveirng themselves up to that system of half proofs which much oftener endangers innocence than it serves to discover guilt. The surest rule of a judge who has presided over the trial, is the conviction of his conscience.—— I have myself watched over the establishment of regular and conservative forms in the finances of the state, and I hope that my people will find themselves well, from the order which I have commanded my ministers of finance and of the public treasure to establish in the accounts which will be public. I have consented that the public debt should bear the name of Monte-Napoleon, to give a guarantee the more of fidelity in the engagements which constitute it, and a new vigour to credit.——The public instruction will cease to be departmental, and I have fixed the basis to give it the ensemble, uniformity and direction, which must have so much influence

upon the morals and habits of the rising generation.——I have judged that it was proper, from this year forward, to place more equality in the distribution of the departmental expenses, and to afford succour to those of my departments, such as the Mincio and the Lower Po, which find themselves burthened by the necessity of defending themselves against the ravages of the waters.——The finances are in the most prosperous situation, and all payments are free of arrears. My people of Italy is of all the nations of Europe the least loaded with taxes. No new burthens shall be laid on them; and if there be any change made in any contribution, if the enregistrement is established in the project of budget, according to a moderate tarif, it is for the purpose of diminishing more onerous impositions: the Terrier is full of imperfections, which manifest themselves every day. To remedy them, I shall vanquish the obstacles which are opposed to such operations, much less by the nature of things than by private interest; I, however, do not hope to arrive at results, such as may cause to be avoided the inconvenience of raising a tax until the period it may reach to.——I have taken measures to order the clergy a proper endowment, which they have been deprived of for these ten years past; and if I have made some unions of converts, I wished to preserve, and it is my intention to protect those who devote themselves to services of public utility, or who, placed in the country parts, are in places and in circumstances wherein they supply the want of secular clergy. I have at the same time provided that the bishops should have the means to be useful to the poor; and I only wait, to occupy myself with the lot of the curates, for the information which I have ordered to be quickly collected upon their real situation: I know that many of them, especially in the mountains, are in a penury which I have the most pressing desire to put an end to.——Independent of the road of Simplon, which will be finished this year, and at which four thousand workmen are working at this moment, in the part alone that crosses the kingdom of Italy, I have ordered that the bridge of Volano should be begun, and that such important works should be undertaken without delay, and pursued with activity.——I have neglected none of the objects upon which my experience in administration could be useful to my people of Italy. Before I return across the mountains, I shall go over a part of the departments to become nearer acquainted with their wants.——I shall leave depositary of my authority this young prince, whom I have brought up from his infancy, and who will be animated with my spirit. I have besides taken measures to direct myself the most important affairs of the state.——Orators of my council will present to you a project of law authorising to my Chancellor Keeper of the Seals, Melzi, to act for four years in the quality of depositary of my authority, as vice-president; a domain which, remaining in his family, may attest to his descendants the satisfaction I nave felt from its services.——I think I have given fresh proofs of my constant resolution to fulfil towards my people of Italy every thing they expect from me. I hope that in their turn they will be desirous of occupying the place that I destine for them in my thoughts; and they never will attain it, but by persuading themselves that the force of arms is the principal support of states.——It is time that that youth who live in the idleness of great cities, should cease to fear the fatigues and dangers of war, and that they should enable themselves to make their country be respected, if they wish their country to be respectable.——Gentlemen of the legislative body, vie in zeal with my council of state, and by that concourse of wills towards the sole aim of the public prosperity, give to my representative the support he should receive from you.——The British government having received, with an evasive answer, the propositions I made to it, and the King of England having immediately rendered them public by insulting my people in his parliament, I have seen the hopes considerably weakened, which I had conceived of the re-establishment of peace. However, the French squadrons have since obtained successes to which I attach importance only because they must farther convince my enemies of the inutility of a war which affords them nothing to gain and every thing to lose. The divisions of the flotillas and the frigates built at the expense of the finances of my kingdom of Italy, and which at present make a part of the French forces, have rendered useful services in many circumstances. I preserve the hope that the peace of the Continent will not be troubled; and at all events, I find myself in a position to fear none of the chances of war; I shall be in the midst of you the very moment my presence would become necessary for the preservation of my kingdom of Italy.

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